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LOTHROP'S DOG

D. LOTHROP & CO. BOSTON

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DROP'S DOG;

AND OTHER STORIES.

✓ BY

MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON, E. S. THAYER
AND ELIZABETH KEES.



BOSTON:
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY,
FRANKLIN ST., CORNER OF HAWLEY.

[1878]

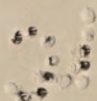
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DROP'S DOG.

“SAY, mother,” spoke up Barney Drop, with his mouth full of delicious cream toast, as the family and their guest, Miss Topliff, who had arrived on the early express that morning, were sitting around the bountifully spread breakfast table, “I’ve just been down to the brook to see if there was a muskrat in my box-trap, and I saw more’n a hundred striped snakes sunning themselves on the green grass of the side-hill back of the barn.”

“Is it possible that your beautiful farm is infested with those disgusting reptiles?” exclaimed Miss Topliff. “I shall not dare step outside the door while I am here, and I have counted on such delightful rambles over your green fields!”

“O, they won’t hurt you,” explained Barney, patronizingly. “They’re not there now; the old cow came along and ate them all up.”

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"Dear me!" cried the astonished lady, with a little shiver, "I never heard of such a thing as a cow devouring snakes."

"Didn't you?" asked Barney, in a tone of pitying surprise. "That is queer. Why, it is only the last of April now, and our old cow has eaten more'n a million already this spring, since the snow went off. It makes her give lots of milk, I can tell you;" and the small boy passed his plate for more toast.

As his father handed back the replenished plate, he nodded his head suggestively toward the corner of the room, where stood a stout whip. Mrs. Drop also, with her face as red as the Bohemian glass pickle tray that she was just then handing to Miss Topliff, gave her ten years old son a sharp look, while she went on making some inquiries of her guest concerning her journey.

That lady evidently made a great effort to appear interested in the conversation, but it was noticeable that she ate no more of the toast, forgot to taste of her amber coffee, rich with golden cream, and, after inquiring whether Mrs. Drop wet up her bread with milk, and being answered in the affirmative, she finished her breakfast with a dry cracker without butter.

For a day or two poor Miss Topliff felt uncomfortable enough. She did not dare to step out of doors

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for fear of encountering a snake, and did not taste of anything into the composition of which butter or milk had entered.

Finally Mrs. Drop's love of hospitality overcame her motherly pride, and, with a doleful face, many sighs, and some tears, she told her guest that ever since Barney had begun to talk he had told the most absurd wrong stories.

"In fact," said the mortified mother, "the child cannot speak the truth. It is impossible to put the least dependence upon a word he says. Punishment doesn't have any effect in the premises, and I am afraid he will grow up to be that most obnoxious of all human creatures, a liar."

Miss Topliff was duly surprised and grieved to hear that any boy, most of all a deacon's son, should develop such an evil propensity. But presently, as she was refreshing herself upon a bountiful lunch of bread and milk she said :

"I have a plan that will, I think, result in Barney's complete cure. You must send him to my brother's family school for boys at D——. His number is limited to eight, but Adam Hall, the colonel's son, you know, is to leave the first of May, and if you would like to have me, I can secure the vacant place for Barney."

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The preliminaries were soon arranged, and the untruthful yet kind-hearted boy, who had never passed a night away from his father and mother, was nearly heart-broken at the idea of being separated from them. His parents endeavored to impress upon his mind the reason they had for sending him away, and promised that as soon as he became cured of the bad habit he should return to his home.

Barney tearfully reiterated his intention of trying to do better, but his father was inexorable in his resolve to send him to the school.

As the deacon and Mrs. Drop bade their little weeping son and Miss Topliff good-by at the door of the car that was to take them to Orchard Homestead, the name of the school, they felt that they themselves were making a sore sacrifice for their boy's future good.

After a day or two Barney wrote home: "I'm so homesick I can't eat tarts — and that's pretty bad. But, if I cry, Philip Hess — he's the red-headed boy — calls me 'rain-drops,' and Barr — he's the boy with checked trousers — calls me 'dew-drops,' and the boy with the red neck-bow, that they call Twigg, says, 'See the tear-drops dripping.'

"I like the crooked-nose boy best; they call him Bean. Though, to be sure, when I was cross once he

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called me 'vinegar drops.' When I treated them all on the candy I brought from home they called me 'peppermint drops' and 'lemon drops.' The names of the other two boys are Witt and Pace. They've all got first names, but they don't use them. We all like the master; he calls me Drop. He talks about how wicked it is to be wicked, especially to tell lies, and I am being better."

Mr. Topliff, the teacher, wrote to Deacon Drop glowing accounts of Barney's good behavior, and said he had not been caught in a wrong story since he had been with him.

Mrs. Drop sent her little son weekly letters, portions of which he always read to the boys, and they wished they had such home-folks, who would write to them such jolly letters.

"Father has bought a dog for me, and is learning him to do all sorts of tricks," Barney announced one day after receiving one of his mother's entertaining letters. The boys would not have been boys had they not been all excitement over this piece of news, and asked numberless questions about the wonderful animal.

"Where did he buy it? What did he pay for it? How large is it? What color? What breed? What is his name? What can he do?"

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Drop couldn't tell, but would ask his mother in his next letter, and would write to her immediately. The next letter came in due time, and the seven eager boys gathered wide-eyed about the eighth to hear the news.

"Father bought him of a blind beggar boy," read Drop glibly, "and paid fifty dollars for him, enough to pay the blind boy's fare to Boston, and to have his eyes doctored."

"That's just like father," said Drop parenthetically, looking up from the letter.

"I wish I could send the blind boy something," said Bean, the crooked-nose boy. "And I!" "And I!" "And I!" chorused all the boys, generously feeling in their pockets, and not finding anything but cotton strings and marbles, and such like school-boy commodities. Then they withdrew their hands, and turned their attention once more to the dog.

"He's a big black and white St. Bernard dog," went on Drop, "big enough for me to ride upon as I would a pony."

"I tell you father wouldn't buy me no little dog," commented Drop again.

"The dog used to carry the blind boy on his back from house to house. Mother says the day he came there it was raining, and Isaac — that's the blind boy's



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name — was sitting on Highjink's back — that's the dog's name — and Isaac was holding an umbrella over his head, and Highjinks had a little basket in his mouth, and mother says she never saw anything so funny in her life !”

“How good you do read writing,” said Hess admiringly, “and call all the big words. I have to study out all the long words in mine.”

“O, mother's writing is just as plain as print,” said Barney, cramming the letter into his pants' pocket ; “anybody could read it.”

“Father has hired a dog-trainer to come out from the city and educate Highjinks,” rapidly read Drop from his next letter, as the boys were grouped around him, under the shade of a large apple-tree near the school-building. “He comes two days in the week, and mother says he says that there is nothing but what that dog is capable of doing. He dances like a bear, and climbs like a monkey, and runs like a fox, and grunts like a pig, and gobbles like a turkey, and bleats like a sheep — and he's learning him to say Barney. I tell you, boys, I want to go home and see that dog.”

The boys were wild over Drop's dog. It was the sensation of the school, and Drop's letters from his mother were as anxiously waited for by the seven boys as by Drop himself.

Drop's Dog.

"Father has had a carriage made for Highjinks," the mother's wonderfully plain print in her next letter said. "It is large enough for two to ride in. It is painted blue like the sky and yellow like gold, and there are green and white flowered velvet cushions, and the harness is made of shiny red leather trimmed with silver stars!"

"Mother says it's the gayest little turn-out in all that region, and that Highjinks is just as proud of it as a boy would be. When he is harnessed up he barks joyously, as much as to say, 'If I am not a pony it's not my fault, but I will serve my young master as well as if I was one.' The other day he took father to the village in five minutes, and there is no horse that can go over the road in that time. Mother says he just straightens himself right out, and that I ought to see him *claw it!* He goes just like a streak!"

"Your mother writes ever so much like a boy!" said Witt.

"I know it," replied Drop unhesitatingly; "it is because I hadn't any brother, and she has always played with me just as if she was a boy, because she didn't like to have me go down to the village to play for fear I should get in with bad companions."

"If it had been told — read, I mean, anywhere but here," said Trigg to Hess that night, as they sat on

Drop's Dog.

top of the high board fence that enclosed the school-grounds, watching for the evening stage, "I should say that Drop spread it on about that dog pretty thick."

"That's so," said Hess; "but nobody would dare tell fibs at this school after hearing the master's lectures about liars. Drop is a good fellow, anyway; he says he wishes we could all go home with him and see Highjinks."

And the boys all agreed that Drop was the best boy in school; the owner of such a wonderful dog was a hero indeed.

Mr. Topliff wrote in one of his letters to Deacon and Mrs. Drop what a favorite their son Barney was with all his boys. The delighted parents wrote back entreating that Barney and his seven mates might come to them and spend the two days' Fourth of July vacation. There would be quantities of roses and strawberries and fresh milk, and the boys could fire Chinese crackers with impunity in the broad meadow back of the house.

The boys were delighted, and could think of nothing else. They had Mr. Topliff write to their parents and guardians, and in a few days consent had been given by them all that the short vacation should be spent at Deacon Drop's.

"Mother says that they have sheared Highjinks

Drop's Dog.

now," Barney said the day before the boys were to set out. "He looks just like a lion, and when they tell him to 'roar' he will shake his mane and make such a noise that it almost makes your hair stand on end."

The boys made the journey by a short steam-car trip, Mr. Topliff putting them in the care of Conductor Weymouth.

"Do you suppose Highjinks will come to the depot?" asked Hess.

"I don't know," said Barney, "I presume so."

But to their disappointment there was only Deacon Drop in a three-seated express wagon, drawn by the old black-farm-horse Roger, and the little dog Sancho, close to his master's feet. He was delighted to see Barney, throwing himself upon his back, and then nearly wriggling himself out of his glossy brindle coat.

Barney went with his father to see about the baggage, and while the deacon was putting it into the wagon Barney hurriedly told the boys that he had inquired for Highjinks, and his father had said that Isaac, the blind boy, had wanted him brought to Boston when his eyes were operated upon. And Barney lugubriously added, "Isaac has died, and Highjinks feels so badly about it he hasn't eaten anything since, and will not notice anyone, and father expects to hear every day that he is dead, too."

Drop's Dog.

"Father and mother feel awfully about it, and father says mother cries if anyone mentions Highjinks, she has become so attached to him. So we mustn't, any of us, say a word about him."

The little fellows were all well-bred, considerate boys, and they kept their great disappointment to themselves.

Arriving at Barney's home they set about enjoying the visit in spite of all.

On the day after their arrival a letter came from Mr. Topliff, which Deacon Drop read aloud to them at the tea-table that had been set in the yard under the cherry trees.

It was a nice, holiday letter, just such a one as Mr. Topliff knew how to write to amuse his pupils, and to make them want to go back to him. At the close of the letter he inquired about "Highjinks" and "Isaac."

"What does he mean by 'Highjinks' and 'Isaac'?" asked Mrs. Drop.

"Why, the dog, you know, and the blind boy who sold the dog to Barney's father!" the boys all said in concert.

Barney sat there in his chair looking disconcerted enough. He was nonplussed for once. In his utter discomfort no subterfuge of words came to the

Drop's Dog.

rescue. He had arrived at the rope's end. No audacious explanation or bold effrontery could help him now.

Mr. and Mrs. Drop now understood that it was one of Barney's stories. The poor mother burst into tears, while the deacon rose, left the table, and went to the barn.

The boys looked at one another in blank astonishment.

At last Barney opened his mouth.

"I couldn't stop telling stories all at once," said the sobbing boy. "When I felt as if I *must* tell a whopper I told it about 'Highjinks.'"

That mortifying exposure cured Barney of telling wrong stories. His generous, sympathetic nature quickly took in the miserable consequences of lying, even when it is resorted to with no malicious intent. He resolutely determined before he returned with the boys to Orchard Homestead that the evil habit should be conquered, and that he would regain the confidence of his school-fellows.

Under the continued tutelage of Mr. Topliff, and by the means of his own ever alert watchfulness. Barney Drop eventually overcame his besetting sin, He grew to be a prosperous merchant, and the scores of business men with whom he deals say that "his word is as good as his note."

MY BOARDER.



UNTIE, are you willing to take another boarder?"

Thus Benjie, coming in one day, with a very mysterious expression on his face, and no hat on his head.

Benjie is my favorite nephew. I was trying my best to comply with his requests as often as possible, during his summer sojourn with me, because he is going to Europe with his father and mother in the fall, to spend some years, and I don't know when I shall see the dear boy again.

My Boarder.

So I replied :

“Perhaps I will — if it is a very small, nice one, and you will pay me suitably.”

I understood something of what a “boarder” meant in Benjie’s phraseology, having already taken a little dog, a rabbit and a guinea hen on his account, and having refused to allow a white mouse, a monkey, or a cat to be brought upon my premises.

“I know it’s little and I guess it’s nice ; it looks so. I’ll saw six more sticks of wood a day to pay for its board.”

However, I didn’t like to complete my bargain without seeing the proposed boarder, for it might be a mole or a snapping turtle, or something else horrible, for aught I knew, yet be “nice ” in Benjie’s opinion.

He went to the door and came back again bringing his hat upside down, neatly covered with his handkerchief. He placed the hat on the table, shut the door, turned up the shutters of the blinds, took the handkerchief off the hat, and invited me to look. I stepped forward cautiously and peeped in ; for I thought perhaps it was something that would jump at me. But it proved to be a young bird with its tail and wing feathers not fully grown, sitting in a nervous manner upon the grass with which Benjie had



My Boarder.

half-filled his hat. The hat was a pretty brown straw trimmed with blue ribbon ; the grass tender and green ; the bird was really pretty for a young bird, and, on the whole, it was not an uninteresting sight, especially with Benjie standing in the background with flushed cheeks, bright, eager, pleading eyes, and golden-brown hair tossed into a myriad of curls around his good-natured face.

“What kind of a bird is it, Benjie ?”

“A brown thrasher.”

“A brown thrush, you mean.”

“No, a brown *thrasher*. Mike told me so, and he knows every bird around here and can mimic them, too. I’ve learned to mimic some. See here !”

And Benjie commenced whistling a succession of shrill notes interspersed with, “that’s a quail, you see,” and “that’s a blue jay,” etc., until I was half distracted.

“That will do, please. Where did you find the bird ?”

“It couldn’t fly you know, and I suppose it got left behind when the other ones flew away. Mike says they do sometimes. Two boys were playing with it in the street down by the mill ; I knew they’d hurt it, and I bought it with some marbles. You say it’s cruel to let such helpless things get hurt, but I don’t

My Boarder.

see the use of taking it away from naughty boys if you can't take care of it yourself until it is able to fly.

Yielding to this forcible argument, I told Benjie he might go into the attic and get an old cage that was there to put the bird in, and then place the cage in the room behind the kitchen which Mike used for a work-room on rainy days ;— that is, if he thought he could be sure and remember the bargain of six extra sticks a day. For I think it is an excellent practice to teach little folks to return some equivalent for what they receive, as that is what we all have to come to when we grow up.

Benjie brought down the cage and spread grass nearly all over the bottom of it. As the little glass jars at the side seemed rather out of reach of this clumsy little bird, I let him have two little white dishes, into one of which he put water, and gave him an egg and a potato to boil, —telling him how to mix them when they were done, —to put into the other dish.

He was busy with his brown "thrasher" the remainder of the morning, and told me triumphantly at noon it had eaten as hearty a dinner as any of us "according to its bigness." I almost repented of my bargain, when he added :

My Boarder.

"Mike says some fresh meat will be good for it every day, chopped fine and mixed with cracker-crumbs and egg.

"I suppose you will give him Pet's eggs?" I ventured to say.

"I guess not, auntie ; you agreed to board him. Pet's eggs are mine. You are to board him and I am to pay his board in sticks. Of course, I shan't pay for his board and then board him myself."

He was too shrewd for me, I said no more. If I had made a bad bargain I must abide by it honorably.

Benjie named his "thrasher" Josephus, a very unsuitable name, suggested by the large gilt letters on the back of one of the volumes in the library. But as the learned Jew had long ceased to be sensitive to such trifles, I did not oppose the fancy.

Josephus lived and thrived. By the last of the month (August) he had become very handsome, having now a full suit of beautiful brown feathers neatly trimmed with white. He had been treated with such invariable kindness and so universally petted, that he was as tame as possible.

His cage in the work-room was left constantly open, giving him the liberty of the room whenever he was inclined to avail himself of it. When the inner door

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was open he would hop out into the kitchen to amuse himself picking up crumbs, or climbing upon the dish which stood by the sink to receive refuse scraps from the table, and dipping his bill among the contents.

Until he began to moult, he sang very blithely and sweetly, mimicing the wild birds out of doors in addition to his own notes, and affording us much entertainment.

Mike frequently caught bugs and grasshoppers for Josephus, of which the latter was very fond, and the way in which the bird played with these insects and tossed them about with his pretty bill to beat the life out of them, was doubtless, less amusing to the victims than to Mike.

I knew the great rough Irishman would never understand or abide by such fastidious tenderness, besides being too old to be reproved or taught in such a matter by me, but I had strictly forbidden Benjie to kill, or cause to be killed, anything but mosquitos; for I think the habit of killing insects and small animals leads to a heartlessness and heedlessness in regard to the lives and happiness of others, which I should be very sorry to see developing in the character of my warm-hearted, generous, little nephew.

It happened, one delightful morning after Benjie and Mike had spent fifteen minutes at the outer door

• *My Boarder.*

of the work room giving Josephus an airing, by allowing him to hop around in the grass about the doorstep, that Mike, just as he was starting for the field, captured a grasshopper and tossed it to Josephus who sprang at his favorite prey with great avidity.

Benjie was somewhat disconcerted. He had begun to fancy that Mike had almost come over to our humane philosophy, the young preacher having given him a lecture on the subject upon every suitable occasion. He began on this occasion :

“Now, Mike, that’s too bad! I thought you’d stopped doing that. I’ve told you I didn’t want Josephus encouraged in eating live things. I guess *you* wouldn’t like to be thrown into a great sharp bill determined to tear you in pieces.”

Mike strode off laughing, and Benjie, partly to follow up the scolding, and partly because he intended to go to the field with Mike and see if the water-melons were ripe, picked up Josephus, who had already dispatched the grasshopper, put him hastily in the work room, shut the door, and ran down the lane after Mike, carelessly leaving a new magazine open on the grass for the chickens to walk over if they felt so disposed.

I was sitting in the bay window of my room a witness to all that occurred, and thinking it easier to replace the book than run and call after such a swift-

My Boarder.

footed youngster, I went to the work room and opened the outside door to get the book, unconsciously how earnestly Josephus was longing to get out of doors again and pick up grasshoppers for himself, to his heart's



Josephus

Drawn by Benjamin L. Carr

content. I had scarcely opened the door, when something fluttered over my head, and looking up I saw the "thrasher" making off on rapid wing.

High and far he flew, the bird that had never before tried the full power of his wings. How glorious it must have been to him, this discovery of his won-

My Boarder.

derful gift for flight; a discovery so suddenly made through fear of my catching him and bringing him back from the beautiful world out of doors, where other birds were so gladsomely singing.

Away he flew down into the distant meadows, his pretty wings filled with such nervous haste as spurs the limbs of little racers who play tag with a swift runner behind or before. The birds and the grasshoppers were before him, and I with my power to compel to durance, was behind.

There was our civilized little Josephus down in the midst of the wild birds, chuckling over my surprise and annoyance, as I stood in the doorway looking helplessly after him — the arch little rogue.

But, of course, I should not attempt chasing a bird especially as I knew I could not catch him in his then runaway mood. Let him stay until he was ready to turn, or, if he chose to remain away permanently there was so much saving of meat, cracker and egg. Indeed, I thought he was about old enough to find his own living.

Picking up the book I came in, leaving the door open in case Josephus should wish to return; for there now arose in my imagination two sweet, reproachful eyes, two very quivering lips, and big tears coursing down two round cheeks, woefully.

My Boarder.

This picture became so affecting, that, after I had been seated at my sewing a few minutes I went back and put the cage out by the doorstep. I wonder if the little runaway witnessed the proceeding, and laughed again at my attempts to lure him back to gloom and captivity on that beautiful August morning.

Hours passed and Benjie did not return. I conjectured that, as on previous occasions, he had shared Mike's lunch, and then taken the lunch basket and gone off blackberrying, in which case, he would not appear until one o'clock, the dinner hour.

Nor was I mistaken. He came home with a mouth like a charcoal bin, swinging a basket nearly full of the blackest of blackberries.

"Who put the cage out there?" he demanded, as soon as he came to the back gate.

"I did."

"What for? And what's the door open for? And where's Josephus? Who's been doing it?"

"The cage is out there for Josephus to look at, the door is open to tell him he is welcome; and if you mean who left the door open, and who put the cage there, I did."

"Who let him out? that's what I want to know."

"I did that, too."

My Boarder.

"I'd like to know what for!" he exclaimed hastily, with crimsoned face and choking voice.

"It was entirely accidental, Benjie. If you had been an orderly boy and put things in their places, it would not have happened," I said, placing myself on the defensive. "I went out to pick up the magazine you left on the grass; as soon as I opened the door Josephus flew over my head and off into the meadows."

Benjie was too young a logician to find an answer to a plea like this; he said no more, but put his basket on the gate post, and started off on a full run, for the meadows.

About the middle of the afternoon, he came back home, looking tired, and sulky, and a little ashamed. Bridget offered him some dinner, which he refused. He stole into the library and got Robinson Crusoe, then retired to the orchard where he lay down under the sweet apple tree, and read and ate apples till he fell asleep.

I went off for a ride with cousin Sarah. I reached home again about dusk. Supper was just ready. I asked for Benjie. Bridget said he was at the barn with Mike. I told her to go and tell him to come in to tea. She went down toward the barn and called him, but he did not obey promptly. As the work-

My Boarder.

room door was nearer the barn than any other door, I went through the kitchen to the work-room, and called out in an imperative voice :

“Benjie, come here at once.”

I soon heard slow steps approaching.

“Benjie, why did you not come as soon as Bridget called you ? ”

“I didn’t know as anybody in particular wanted me, and I was helping Mike,” said a sweet but somewhat surly little voice.

“What makes you so sullen, Benjie ? I am ashamed of you.”

“Josephus will never come back again,” he replied in solemn measured tones.

“Very well, that is no fault of mine.”

He followed me in silently.

Just then there was a low chirp near us ; we both stood still. There was another and another little chirp.

Benjie said nothing.

“Bridget, bring a light here,” I called.

Bridget brought a light, and there sat Josephus on the work-table among the tools, looking as calm and honest and innocent as if he had not been playing a trick on Benjie and me all day long. He had evidently grown homesick, as the shades of evening fell

My Boarder.

in the quiet meadows, and longing for his old home and old friends had hurried back to the work-room.

Benjie caught him in his hands, and putting him lovingly up against his cheek scolded and praised him by turns, with great fluency, first for going away and then for coming back again.

I was as heartily glad as Benjie, though not so demonstrative. I had tea delayed until an egg could be boiled for Josephus, and his supper set forth in good style.

Then Benjie, with a face from which every unpleasant expression had vanished, joined us in the dining-room, and went into raptures over the pretty case of drawing-pencils I had brought him from the city, deciding that his first sketch should be a portrait of Josephus.

The picture accompanying this narrative is an exact copy of that original sketch ; but I cannot say the original sketch is as faithful a portrait of Josephus.

Those who have known the brown, or song thrush to be one of the most timid and wary of all our wild birds will be interested to know that this story of the domestication of one of that family is not a fabrication, but the history of an actual fact.

A FOX.

“**C**OUSIN JAMES, what does foxy mean? What is it to be foxy? I have heard Aunt Kit tell Uncle Rob his moustache was foxy, just to tease him but I don’t see how it did. And I have heard grandfather say Martin Van Buren was foxy; he was the eighth president, you know. And, Cousin James, everybody says ‘cunning as a fox.’ Did you ever see one? Are they anywhere now?”

“Certainly, there are foxes yet. I have seen many a one!”

“For sure ones, Cousin James?”

“Yes, ‘for sure ones,’ some that were very ‘for sure,’ I thought.”

“Oh, do tell us about them! tell us a fox story, won’t you, a real true one?”

“Well, boys, I don’t mind if I do, for I am the young fellow that can.”



A Fox.

And they all laughed, for his whiskers were as white as their grandfather's.

"Oh, that will be jolly!" exclaimed Rob, "you are just tip top, Cousin James!" And Rob clapped his hands and jumped ever so high and struck his heels together as an accompaniment—or perhaps as an escapement—for some of his vim, for Rob was a very live boy indeed. But he always quieted down in a hurry when there was a story to be told. He was always a good listener when that was "the business," as he termed it, and in a moment he was all eyes as well as ears, for it was a good deal to *see* Cousin James tell a story, as well as to hear him.

"When I was a lad," said Cousin James, "my father lived half a dozen miles from Albany, out towards the Helderbergs. The name has rather a wicked sound to people who have never heard any Holland Dutch, and perhaps it has to you."

"Oh! no, it hasn't, we know what it means. It's clear mountains, or clear hills, and you know mountains are only big hills, I think it is just splendid. Grandfather told us long ago. He knows *everything!*"

"Ho, ho!" said Cousin James, with a grand air and a saddened tone that made him seem almost as wise as an owl as well as very much injured in his own

A Fox.

opinion of himself. "He knows everything, does he? Then he must know all about foxes — and it will — hardly — be worth while —"

And then he paused and looked at his watch, and looked out at the weather, and looked altogether as if he had other fish to fry and 'Grandfather' could just as well do that lot as he, and in the opinion of the boys much better most likely.

"Oh!" cried Rob, "grandfather doesn't know *real* fox stories, Cousin James, at least I don't think he does! He knows just about stories in books, and about people ever so far off that you don't care about — that is — so very much when you are boys, you know! Do stay and tell us, I didn't mean anything!"

Well, Cousin James "didn't mean anything" either, except to tease, and so he went on with his story.

"Something was stealing our chickens, and it did not take long to discover that the thief was a sly old fox — his tracks were plain to be seen — but we were long enough in finding how to get rid of him, or rather how to outwit him, and although we knew the fox pretty well then, we knew him much better afterward. It is a good deal to be as cunning as a fox. Boys have to be pretty smart for that. And our American fox, called the *red fox* — though he is only

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a reddish yellow — is the cunningest of all the foxes. We were four boys, with plenty of work and school to do, and but few pennies to spend in powder ; even if we had had time to become practical shots. Besides, we were mostly too small to handle well the old-fashioned, heavy gun that father used on training days, and we had no other. They didn't have big guns and little guns, and all sorts of guns, then, as they do now."

"What were 'training days,' Cousin James? do we have those now, too?"

"Why I expect boys train yet, or get trained!"

"Oh! you know it isn't that kind I mean! What kind was it to train with guns?"

"Well, I don't know what is the good of your learned grandfather," replied Cousin James, with another of his grand airs, "if he has never told you about a militia training! Why, it was just the gayest thing! It was none of your select soldiering of now-a-days! Every man, that wasn't old — wasn't forty-five I mean,—for I am young, you know — (the boys giggle) shouldered a gun and learned how fields were won! Our standing army was a big thing in those times! But dear me! I can't tell two stories at once, if I am young. Father left it to us, to do the chickens and the foxes, or rather the fox, as best we

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could. He had had enough of that kind of thing and would have thought it a waste of time and money too for him to engage in it.

“Our reason for thinking there was but one fox was not only because we found the tracks of but one, but because we knew it was the habit of the fox to go about alone. He is sly, even with his kind, and when he starts out for something to eat, he doesn’t invite his neighbor fox to go along, neither to dine with him when he gets back, and he is never supposed to attend tea parties where he might forget and possibly gossip of any poultry yard or rabbit warren he knows of.

“I was the youngest, but I counted one in all the planning. We had had practice with traps of one kind and another. We had caught rabbits, woodchucks, weasels, and why could we not catch a fox, even though it was said foxes were rarely caught in that way, that they were much too cunning? He might accidentally get into a trap, whatever his intentions. It was as much as we could do to keep out of them ourselves, and more than we had always done. There had nearly been a toe lost on one occasion—Brother Tom had set his foot down in the wrong place,—and so we decided to try that mode.

“Well, we had set our traps for a month and we

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had 'slept on our guns,' as you might say. We had been ready to pounce on the enemy at the first signal of alarm from the hen-roost. We had been up every morning with the sun, we had not been called once! The expectation of finding the enemy fast in one of our traps was quite enough to start us out betimes. But never a fox did we see! nothing but his tracks! and every morning another chicken gone — when we fed and counted them!

At length we concluded to try shutting them up in the barn, nights, and making that fox-proof, for the fox sees in the dark like a cat, and usually gets his food nights and sleeps day-times, at least he keeps out of sight days, and we may suppose sleeps, when he is not too busy plotting and planning about his daily bread.

"We were up the next day earlier than usual, quite in the gray of the morning, and for the first time we got a glimpse of Master Reynard. He was making off at the top of his speed, but with never a chicken *that time!* We wished him a pleasant good morning, and wished him *farther*, as we hurrahed and shouted after him.

"But, he sold us!

"After we had looked about awhile and fed the sheep and cows, we let out the fowls and fed them.

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We had been careful to shut them all in, turkeys and geese too, for any of them would have been a dainty bit to Reynard. It had got to be broad daylight and we all stood there in the bright morning sun, watching them eating, admiring one and another, telling which were ours — and ours — and thinking what lucky fellows we were, for all, when behold! there was the fox again! and just making off with brother Jo's Dominique hen, right before our face and eyes! While we thought he had gone away, for that day at least — we had not expected much more than that — he had only gone to wait till we should let them out and then give him a chance to get his breakfast.

“Brother Sam — he was the eldest of us — started after him. He knew he would not go far holding the hen by the neck, just as he had seized her, and dragging her on the ground (his legs are short), but would stop and throw her over his back. For although the fox is small, only two feet or a little more in length, he is strong, and besides has a big bushy tail that does him good service in balancing with whatever load he may choose to lay on, chicken, turkey or other.

“Brother Sam's plan was to overtake him and get the hen away, when he stopped to make the change. He did not, however, succeed in getting quite up with

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the fox, but he got near enough to frighten him into dropping his prey, by shouting and luckily throwing his hat so that it fell over the fox's head.

"We regarded his success as a second victory for our side; we made a close count of our gains, they were so few. Keeping the fox out of the barn was one, in our opinion, and getting the stolen hen back again would have been one more in any boy's counting, I am sure. We thought we had won at last; but Reynard was hungry and Reynard was brave — on that occasion at least; though he is called rather timid. And besides he had won so many victories he didn't know defeat. So, while we were talking over the recapture, what should he do — but come back again and get another good fat hen, before we knew he was anywhere around. We thought he had gone, that time, straight to his hole or wherever he lived. But we had learned 'the art of war' and we got that back too.

"Well, then you would have thought *sure* that he would have given up stealing *our* chickens, to say the least, for that morning's breakfast; for there we stood, four strong yet, Sam, Tom, Jo and I, beside an outlying force of cackling geese, as well as hens, that made noise enough to have saved Rome half a dozen times over, even without the aid of the big gobbler

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and squalking old peacock that strutted about and spread his tail in the face of most everybody! However, the peacock's tail might have been a screen for Master Reynard.

"But whatever you would have thought, or anybody would have thought, he did no such thing, but just went for still another 'good fat hen,' and you had better believe we went for him too, for we just did and we got her! the *third* one! back again, but never a hair of the thief yet.

"However, that time he *did* go to the woods. It was not very far off, only a field between, and there was no possuming about it either — no skulking behind bushes and the like, for we saw him every step of the way, and *he intended we should!* He thought we would then go to our own breakfast and leave him to get his in peace and quiet. Quite likely he had heard it said the third time always conquers, and thought we believed it, but we did not; at least we did not believe we had driven him off, and more, we didn't believe he could be driven off, and we must therefore be in at his death in some shape — the poultry could not be kept shut up all day.

"We held a council of war and concluded to borrow neighbor Freeman's hound and try what we could do with him — Tom went for him while the rest of us stood guard.

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“We had plumped on the grand idea of hunting Reynard in his hole as Putnam did the wolf. If we did not win a renown that should take us down to posterity, we should at least make ourselves famous in the neighborhood.

“But whether it was that we did not know how to manage the dog, or that he had not a keen scent, or that the fox had utterly outwitted us once more, was never quite clear, but whichever it was, when we got to what we thought was about the place where he had his bed and board, and there were plenty of feathers and bones lying about, in evidence of it, too, the hound had lost the scent—he positively refused to make any search!

“We were quite sure, however, that so bold a fox as he would be around again shortly for something to stay his stomach, even if getting in his provisions by day was not his usual habit. So we held a new council of war and decided upon another plan—we would bring the old gun into action.

“We took the dog to the house and gave him a place besides the kitchen fire, where he would not only be out of sight, but contented enough not to bark; and then took up a position in the hay-loft where we could overlook the approaches of the enemy.

“Brother Sam, being the older as well as larger, of course, manned the gun. He was stationed at the

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upper door, where we threw hay down to the cattle. The rest of us were posted at various cracks and knot-holes and so had a good field view. And sure enough, we did not wait long before out popped Reynard from the woods, though by no means from the place where he went in; he thought we might be watching that. Possibly he had been to some other cupboard and found it bare and was on his way back, but in any event, he most likely had in mind one of his usual tricks of war, a little game of hide and seek. He looked cautiously about, to satisfy himself the way was clear. He was evidently persuaded, however, that there was possible danger in store for him somewhere, for he had not got far before he stopped and rolled himself white, in a light snow that had fallen the night before. If he had known our position and the watch we had on him, he doubtless would have done so before he commenced his march in the open field. Then, again, he would lie flat down on the ground for awhile, making believe he was but the ground, in order to deceive us as well as get an opportunity to listen and look about at his leisure.

“The senses of the fox are all keen; he can hear as well as he can see, and sound is louder with the ear to the ground, but he did not catch the sound of **our** footsteps that time; several feet of hay was too



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thick a cushion under them. Then he would roll himself white again in the snow and shelter himself behind bushes, or anything else in his way. Finally, by short stages, — for his snow mantle had to be put on a good many times — he got within range of our gun and we prepared to open fire on him. The man in charge of the old-flint lock — percussion-caps had not been heard of then, brought it cautiously to bear on him.

“Well, boys, I suppose you know what running is, most boys do, but if you had been there when the muzzle of that gun appeared over the edge of the door and had seen that fox run, you would have thought he went by telegraph! There was nothing but a streak, and a mighty short one, at that.

“It was, of course, very provoking, having anything going through your poultry yard stealing and destroying as he did. He carried off and killed some fifty, all told, of our chickens, before we were done with him — but foxes feed also on rats, mice, moles, woodchucks, and it would have been quite as much economy in the long run to have winked at more of their thieving, they would have kept down —”

“But, Cousin James, what did you do next? How did you get rid of the fox?”

“WE MOVED AWAY.”



THE ARTIST AND THE BEAR.

FOUR long years the artist and I worked together and camped together, and rode side by side among the crags and the forests and the canons of the Rocky mountains. Night after night our blankets have been spread beside the camp-fire, sometimes we two alone, sometimes surrounded by three or four companions, but alone, or with a larger party, the artist and I have always been together.

Often, for days and weeks, we rode and worked and sketched and slept without seeing a single human being but the laboring men who were our "packers," and often, from the very loneliness of our surroundings, riding for hours through the great wilderness without exchanging a single word. Being so much together, and so much alone together I know the artist pretty well, and I know he is a brave, cool man, and

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this story is to be a story of his bravery and his coolness and one that will show something of what a lonely kind of a life is led away off among the great mountains of the West.

One night a little party of four of us were camped close up under the snow drifts which all summer long patch the mountain summits. The place of the camp was a little grassy valley just at the mouth of a deep cañon, and all surrounded by the heaviest kind of dark pine timber, and watered by a little stream not more than an hour away from its mother snow-drift. We were more than a hundred miles from the nearest house, and, lying that evening by our camp-fire, could distinctly hear now and then the crackling of a bush or dry branch, as some deer came stealing round to see what the great camp-fire blaze could mean, or what new kind of an animal it was which had come to keep him company in this lonely place.

Sometimes, too, a mule would give a startled snort as he smelled out the neighborhood of a prowling bear, for our faithful mules were good guards, and never let a bad intruder into camp without giving their warning.

Away off in so lonely a place, it is not strange that the party got to talking of Indians and bears, and telling stories we had heard or known some time of

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fight with one or with the other. There were especially a good many bear stories told, and more than one of the grizzly bear, and how, wounded by a rifle shot, he would often live long enough to kill or maim the hunter, or to cripple him for life. The fact was stated that the grizzly bear would often live for some seconds when shot clear through the heart; and one story told where the bear and the hunter had been found side by side dead; the death-shot of the bear not having killed him soon enough to save the poor man's life.

I remember lying there on my heavy overcoat, and meditating the chances of a single shot with my light rifle if a bear should attack me, and finally, I think, coming to the conclusion that, as I had not lost any bears, I had not better hunt much for them.

The artist sat on the ground close by me, cleaning his gun, and giving the lock now and then an ominous snap, as much as if he had thought, "I guess you are a pretty good bear gun! I think I would like to try you on a grizzly just once, anyhow."

The artist had a new gun and a particularly fine one; but he hadn't shot any thing with it for some time, and, though he did not say much, he evidently had made up his mind to shoot something pretty soon.

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After we had talked and told stories by the camp-fire light for an hour or two we all went off to sleep, and, sleeping soundly till the next morning woke up at daylight to find that it was raining a little, but in spite of it we determined to climb up one of the high mountains near us.

We were all pretty heavily loaded ; with our instruments, our big over-coats, our note-books, our rifles and field glasses. I remember the artist carried his army overcoat on one arm, his rifle on the other, while a geological hammer hung at his belt, and a field-glass and a sketch-book case were slung from his shoulders. During the day we all got separated, and were working round alone, and, though we saw and fired at several deer, all were too far off for us to hit them. As I said, we were all separated in the mountains, but, as we are particularly interested in the artist you and I will follow him, and leave the others to get back to camp as best they may.

As he worked and climbed along he was tempted so many times to shoot at distant or running deer, that when, late in the afternoon he left the mountain to come down to camp, he found himself the possessor of no game and only one cartridge.

It was still raining ; he was tired, wet, hungry, and, heavily loaded as he was, had still two miles through

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the forest to walk before he would reach the camp-fire. It was not a pleasant prospect for a weary man, those last two miles at the end of a hard and rainy day, but as there was no help for it he started manfully out, and shoving, jumping, stumbling, he worked his way along.

He had already made about one half of the whole distance, and was grumbling to himself because he had seen and got no game all day. It was now almost night. The early twilight was rapidly deepening the forest darkness, the day noises were getting hushed, the little birds were just peeping out good-nights, the whole place getting more and more lonely and still, when, picking himself up from a tired man's uncertain stumble, he felt a shiver run through him, as, just ahead in his path he heard a deep, ominous growl. His eyes sought the direction of the sound, and there, not more than twenty or thirty feet away, he saw, above a heavy fallen log, the long humped back and waving fur of an unmistakable grizzly bear!

Do you wonder he was startled? away there alone in the wild cañon, hampered by his heavy load, and having in his possession only one cartridge to meet so formidable an adversary right in his very path! The artist is a cool man, but that tried his nerves.

However, Bruin did not give him long to think, but, raising himself with his forepaws on the log, he gave



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another challenging growl, and stared the artist in his face, those big jaws open, the eyes sparkling, and all the hair about his face erect with his anger and surprise at this intrusion. The artist stood there, too, so fixed with his astonishment that he hardly knew how to act. I do not believe that he was really frightened, for it is not easy to frighten him ; but he certainly did stand there a moment so fixedly that the bear evidently concluded he did not want anything to do with so foolish a fellow, and quietly dropping off the log he started to walk away.

By this time, though, the hunter's blood was up in the artist, and, moving quickly up two or three steps, he called out, " Boo ! boo ! "

Such impudence ! The bear turned round, and, trundling himself up to the log again, he raised at full height up over it, and looked down on his pigmy antagonist with a deep and angry growl. He stood there full breast towards the artist, towering above him like a disturbed giant as he was. This time the artist did not hesitate a moment, but, raising his gun deliberately, he aimed it at the animal's broad breast. Doubting then if the lock was set rightly he lowered the gun, and, resetting it, he coolly raised it to his shoulder, selected his mark, and carefully, slowly aiming, he fired.

The rifle's crash went echoing down the cañon, and

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before the smoke had cleared away the bear was tearing through the timber. Three or four jumps were all he made, and, pitching forward, all was still. The hunter listened for a moment, but no noise was in the woods except the still evening chirpings. Then moving cautiously forward, he found the dead body of his grizzly bear stretched out upon the ground some thirty feet from the log where it had stood opposing him. The ball had gone through the animal, piercing both heart and lungs.

Our hunter did not stay by his fallen enemy long, but, satisfied that it was really dead he left it lying there, and hurried on through the forest in the growing darkness to the camp, and told us of his risky shot, and how his big dead bear was lying about a mile up the cañon. The artist was a proud and happy man that night, and very thankful too.

The next morning we helped him skin it, and carried the skin to camp to stretch and dry, and then he brought it with him East to have it dressed and trimmed; and to-night, as I sit here writing in our bachelor quarters, the artist sits opposite me at the table, and his grizzly bear-skin lies between us as a handsome rug, a trophy and a memento of the West.



THE FIRST AND LAST TOURNAMENT.

THE nursery was in open rebellion, and all because Hal and Mary had a secret. Grace said, "Never mind if they have. I don't care to know what it is ; I wouldn't listen if they wanted to tell it to me."

Mab was very much troubled and hurt about it, for it was the first time anything of the kind had happened.

The twins, Tom and Paul, who if left to themselves would not have given it a second thought, now took sides with Mab, and were very angry.

Sweet little Alice echoed the "too bads" and "real means," without understanding a word of the matter.

Mab made up her mind she would find out the secret. As she was a most persevering little body, the

The First and Last Tournament.

boys felt sure she would. She explored every corner of the play-room, hunted in all the hiding-places in the garret, rummaged the desks in the school-room, and visited all the haunts in the garden, without success. At last she went to Hal's room, and on his writing-desk found an open book which she pounced upon. It was "Ivanhoe," and as she had never read it she began at once on the page before her, hoping to find a clue to the secret. Her eyes fell upon a sentence which was marked with a pencil. It was this :

"At the flourish of clarions and trumpets they started out against each other at full gallop."

She read on for some time, and thought she was reading about rather a poor circus. All at once a light dawned upon her.

"I know what it is — they are going to get up a play!" She ran to the nursery, shouting, "Hurrah, hurrah! I've found it out!"

The next thing was to come down upon the guilty ones, and the children started out to find them. Hunting and finding were two different matters. They searched the garden through and through, and called until they were hoarse. At last they came upon the gardener, who told them he saw Master Hal and Miss Mary go up into the barn chamber an hour

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ago. The four children scrambled up the steep stairs. Grace, true to her word, keeping in-doors. When they had passed through the low door they saw Mary, Hal, and three of his playmates, seated on boxes and broken chairs.

Mab led the invaders, and, without waiting for reception or greeting, danced about in triumph, screaming:

"I've found it out, I've found it out! It's a play, and they all ride in on horses and fight."

The conspirators looked confounded. For a moment all was still. Hal was the first to recover himself.

"Well," said he, "you needn't make so much noise about it!"

The truth was, the necessity of more actors had begun to be felt, and it now seemed easy to secure them.

"I say, Hal," cried Tom, "is it a circus? Who's to be the clown?"

"Do let me be the monkey," said Paul. "I can tie on Nancy's old fur tippet for a tail."

"Do be still!" exclaimed Mary. "Who told you it was to be a circus? It's something much nicer, it's a Tournament."

Then came a long explanation, and at the end the children were wild with excitement. To be sure,

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their ideas were not very clear, but the pleasure of being dressed up and having a band was bliss enough.

This is the way they arranged it :

Hal was to be "Ivanhoe, the Disinherited Knight." His three companions, "The Black Knight," "Brian de Bois-Guilbert," and "Front-de-Bœuf." Mab was to be "The Herald." Little Alice, the "Queen of Love and Beauty." Mary was to conduct the band, which consisted of three pieces : a comb, by Grace—if she was willing, a tin trumpet, by Tom, and a drum, by Paul.

The performance was to take place on Saturday afternoon, and Mary said she would persuade Grace to help them, as she could get up the dresses better than anybody else.

This was Tuesday, so there was time enough to get ready. Every sort of thing was begged from mamma, who like a wise woman asked no questions, but kept a sharp lookout on the doings of her young people.

Dear Aunt Eliza's hoards were ransacked over and over again, and Grace was kept very busy over the habiliments and trappings of the gay knights.

The Queen's toilette was easily disposed of, as a gorgeous wreath of paper roses seemed to be the only thing needed.

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The Herald's outfit was more difficult. Mab undertook the head-gear and helped herself so liberally from the tin closet that the cook threatened to tell mamma; but she was pacified by the promise of a ticket to the performance. With a dish-cover, colander and funnel, fastened together in some marvelous way, and the whole surmounted with a small feather duster, her head really presented quite a warlike appearance. A scarlet bathing-dress and a soldier's sash gave her a look which answered the purpose very well, for, as Mary said, "Nobody was expected to keep a Herald's dress on hand." She completed her get-up by nearly losing herself in Hal's rubber boots.

The twins were made military and happy by paper caps ornamented with bands of scarlet and gold, and with gilt paper straps put on crosswise over one shoulder.

Hal's "suit of armour of steel, richly inlaid with gold," was a triumph of art. Silver paper, covered with thin white muslin, was fastened upon pasteboard, and Grace adroitly fitted and sewed together a garment very like a soldier's cuirass. This was trimmed with gold paper. A helmet was easily made of pasteboard, and a large tin dish-cover served for a shield.

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To have his costume complete, she cut out of paper "a young oak tree pulled up by the roots," and pasted it upon the shield. The equipments of the other three knights were made in the same way, with slight variations—the Black Knight looking like a thunder cloud.

After many discussings it was decided that velocipedes should be used for steeds. It was not difficult to get four, and the boys practiced upon them every spare moment.

The band retired to the summer-house every day for a rehearsal, and under Mary's careful drilling could play something that sounded really like a march.

Mab was instructed by Hal to begin the exhibition by reciting, while marching through the lists, "Largesse, largesse, gallant Knights," and Dan, the gardener's son, was supplied with round pieces of tin to shower down upon her. The spectators were all to be seated in the lists, as ample room was needed for the display of prowess by the knights.

Hal had many rehearsals with Bois-Guilbert; but the hardest thing he had to do was to "compel his horse to go backward through the lists."

After the combat between Ivanhoe and the Templar, the Black Knight and Front-de-Bœuf were to



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have a chance to distinguish themselves. This seemed to the boys to be a fair way.

At last Saturday did come. They had quite an audience. Papa, mamma, and Aunt Eliza, with Uncle John's family of six. The cook, housemaid and nurse respectfully took back seats, and Dan sat with the band. The gardener was behind the scenes with the horses.

"The Queen of Love and Beauty" was a sight well worth seeing. She was mounted upon a throne of piled-up boxes deceitfully covered with a wolf-robe. The crown of the victor gave her so much trouble Grace hung it upon a nail behind her, meaning to put it in her hands at the right moment.

At two, precisely, the band struck up the march. Then Tom blew his trumpet long and loud, and in pranced the Herald with a gait invented for the occasion. Mab was a little flustered at seeing the audience for the first time, and got confused in her opening address. She began :

"Law's yes, law's yes, gallant Knights," but it sounded so nearly right she wisely thought she would let it go.

Dan did his part bravely, and dispensed his favors with such a willing hand that our poor little Herald nearly lost her helmet, as it was, the plume was

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knocked out. But nothing daunted, she raised the shout:

“Love of Ladies — Death of Champions — Honor to the Generous — Glory to the Brave,” and the band wildly tooted, drummed and blew, “The Star Spangled Banner,” and the Herald departed.

Then came an anxious moment. At last, at a signal from Mary, “came one of those long and high flourishes,” from the band, and three knights rode in on their gallant steeds, and took their stand at the head of the lists. Soon was heard the sound of a distant trumpet, and in rode brave Ivanhoe at full speed.

After advancing and saluting the knights, he began his perilous backing feat. He got through half the distance very well, but, alas for his dignity! some of the coins that were showered from the galleries had not been picked up by the Herald, and over went horse and rider.

Mab and the gardener rushed to the rescue, and he was soon remounted, but he contented himself with ordinary horsemanship after that. The audience was generous and applauded well.

The champion rode straight up to the knights, and struck the shield of Bois-Guilbert until it rang again. The Templar exclaimed:

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“Look your last upon the sun ; for this night thou shalt sleep in paradise.”

“Gramercy for thy courtesy,” replied the Disinherited Knight.

Then the band gave the signal and the two knights rushed at each other.

This came out all right : neither was unhorsed, and the noise was really deafening.

The champions rested a few moments, and then at the sound of the trumpet they made another rush. Bois-Guilbert had been carefully instructed in his part and was to allow himself to be unhorsed at the second attack ; but his boy nature got the best of him, and forgetting all his drilling he fought with such a will that, being larger than Hal, he soon got the advantage, and the Disinherited then was robbed of honors as well as lands by being laid low.

At this unexpected turn of affairs the two knights in waiting could restrain themselves no longer and made a rush at each other.

Ivanhoe scrambled to his feet and tried his best to separate the two infuriated knights, but in vain, for their horses had got hopelessly entangled. Soon the three fell to the ground.

The Queen, thinking this the right moment for crowning the victor, climbed to the top of her some-

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what unstable throne to reach the crown, when the boxes beneath the robe gave way and down fell Her Majesty with an awful crash. Papa rushed and rescued her from the wreck of former grandeur.

Then was heard a cry for help from below. The loud noise overhead had frightened the horse and he had broken his halter and run down the road.

The boys picked themselves up and gave chase in spite of their bruises.

Mab, who had entered into the play heart and soul, was so disappointed at its unfortunate ending she sat down and cried. The twins, to comfort her, brought the poor battered crown and put it on top of her helmet. This tableau so amused the sympathetic friends that they burst into a shout of laughter, in which Mab joined as heartily as the rest; and "amidst the wreck of matter" the indulgent audience scattered.



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